

New Jersey Department of Personnel e~BULLETIN



James E. McGreevey, Governor • AUGUST 2004 • Ida L. Castro, Commissioner

New Jersey's public servants make a difference

by Commissioner Ida L. Castro

Having served in Washington before coming to New Jersey to become Personnel Commissioner in January, 2002, I was well aware of the important contributions that career government employees make to our quality of life. These are often unseen and mostly taken for granted; nonetheless, we should appreciate that life would not be the same here in New Jersey without many of the services our public employees provide us day in and day out.



As I prepare to step down from my post to return to academia, I can say from first-hand experience that I have become even more of an advocate for the dedicated career public servants who do the work that keeps this state moving. Perhaps because they do their work so well, we forget they are there.

We think of "the State" when we get our drivers' licenses, pay our taxes and travel the public roadways. We don't often see the other public employees serving us on the front lines every day: teachers, nurses, law enforcement professionals, scientists, psychiatrists, environmentalists, social workers, accountants, and more.

We have good, talented people and we need more to replace those who leave or retire. The work is demanding and rewarding.

As Commissioner, I have become more familiar with the challenges and demands our public workforce faces each day. I have been fortunate to preside over the State's annual employee recognition ceremony,



New Jersey now has the most diverse workforce in the State's history.

where more than one thousand outstanding public employees nominated by their peers are recognized for their contributions to their workplaces and communities. It has been inspiring and reassuring to learn there are so many fine women and men committed to doing the right thing for New Jersey.

Like the Corrections officer who risked his life to pull people out of a burning car. Or, the team of Department of Transportation employees that was among the first responders when the casino garage collapsed last October in Atlantic City. Or, the Department of Health and Senior Services' multidisciplinary HIV/AIDS team, which has implemented a new rapid way to test and diagnose HIV disease, helping more people to know their HIV status, preventing disease progression, and saving millions of dollars in testing costs. Or, like the hundreds

of State employees who voluntarily enrolled for 20 hours of community emergency response training (CERT) so that, when and if the next emergency arises, they can support the first responders at work or in their communities.

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Police Assistant program recruits new talent

The NJ Department of Personnel is working to expand a successful recruitment program to help municipalities employ police officers from a more diverse population by first hiring promising local talent as Police Assistants.

Police Assistants undergo structured on the job training before being given the opportunity to be promoted to the position of Police Officer.

NJDOP works with interested local governments to establish the program and meet such requirements as determining the number of Police Assistant positions to be created, detailing a recruitment program, and establishing training that conforms to the current New Jersey Police Training Commission program for Class 1 Special Law Enforcement Officers.

The goals of this program include enabling police departments to be more representative of the communities they serve and continuing to improve the quality of candidates considered for law enforcement positions. For more information, please call 609.984.2344.

ELIGIBLE LISTS ON THE WEB

On September 1, NJDOP will begin posting eligible lists – both entry level and promotional – on our website: www.nj.gov/personnel. Lists will appear as soon as they become public information and will remain online for 90 days. Lists will reflect results known only at the time they are issued.

This service gives employers and employees instant access to the full spectrum of lists, with few exceptions.

Schwartz appointed Deputy Commissioner

Commissioner Ida L. Castro has announced the appointment of Marjorie A. Schwartz as the Deputy Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Personnel. Schwartz will assume all duties and responsibilities of the Commissioner until a new commissioner is designated.

"I have every confidence that under Marge's stewardship the Department of Personnel will continue to function effectively and will be well positioned to transition to a new Administration," said Commissioner Ida L. Castro.

Schwartz has served as NJDOP's Assistant Commissioner of State and Local Operations since May 2002. During her tenure, she was responsible for a staff of more than 300 that provided human resource management and employee support programs for 200,000 State and local government employees.

"As the acting Commissioner, I plan to continue to provide our State workforce

with fair and equal opportunities as well as an efficient work environment that in turn will enhance employees' careers and personal lives," said Schwartz.

From 1997 to 2002, Schwartz was the Director of Division of Human Resources for the Department of Personnel, where she was responsible for administering human resources services to State and local government personnel. Services included classification and compensation, recruitment, hiring and various personnel related programs. Prior to joining the Department of Personnel in 1991, she was Strategic Planner and Training Officer for the New Jersey Department of Motor Vehicles.

Schwartz, a resident of Burlington County, earned a bachelor's degree from Oberlin College in Ohio. She continued her education at Rutgers Graduate School of Public Policy in Camden where she studied Personnel Management.

Commissioner Castro bids farewell to Department, *continued*

There are some things that government simply does better, or does because no one else will. Either way, we must not underestimate the contributions of civil servants. Whether safeguarding our children, caring for our most vulnerable citizens, enhancing homeland security, protecting our environment, or providing any other essential service, our public workforce is there for us.

Thanks to Gov. James E. McGreevey and the Legislature, who understand the importance of investing in technology, the Department of Personnel is now building a systems infrastructure that will allow it to transform its business practices, streamline service to public employers and employees, and ultimately, open the door to significant changes in the Merit System. Together with an extraordinary staff at the Department, our colleagues in government, management and labor, and

other stakeholders throughout the state, I have worked over the last two and a half years to ensure our state, county and local governments operate a fair and efficient civil service system that attracts, nurtures and retains the best and the brightest, providing equal opportunity for all who are willing to work.

I have seen New Jersey's public workforce rise to many challenges, become more diverse and more focused on delivering the services our state needs most. It has been my privilege to work with New Jersey's civil servants. It is our good fortune that they are — behind the scenes and on the front lines — working for New Jersey.

Ida L. Castro was appointed by Gov. McGreevey as Commissioner of Personnel in January 2002. In September 2004, she steps down to assume The Haywood Burns Chair in Civil Rights at CUNY School of Law.

Employee Highlights

Commission Castro appoints two to top posts, Michele Meyer-Shipp and Candice G. Hendricks

Commissioner Ida L. Castro has appointed Michele C. Meyer-Shipp, Esq., as Director of the Division of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action at the New Jersey Department of Personnel. Meyer-Shipp has responsibility for developing and administering equal employment policies and procedures and affirmative action programs for all State employees in the career, senior, and executive service and unclassified services. Her new role includes ensuring that all state agencies comply with the various laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to EEO/AA. As Director, Meyer-Shipp also serves as the Executive Secretary for New Jersey's Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Commission.

"Equal opportunity for all of New Jersey's citizens is a top priority for Governor McGreevey and this Administration. Our State workforce must reflect all of the people we serve if we are to perform our job duties effectively in the communities we serve," Commissioner Castro stated.

"As the new Director, I plan to work collaboratively with each State department and agency to assist them in fulfilling these requirements. At the end of the day, the State's workforce is best served with a diverse workforce in which employees are encouraged to respect and celebrate each other's back-

grounds," said Meyer-Shipp. "The Division of EEO/AA is charged by State statute

sioner Castro. As the new Legislative Liaison, Hendricks monitors and analyzes

proposed legislation which affects the State, county and local public workforce, and advocates on behalf of the Department of Personnel before the New Jersey State Legislature. She is also responsible for ensuring department compliance with the "Open Public Records Act," and serves as the government records custodian for the Department of Personnel. "Ms. Hendricks brings a wealth of legal experience to this post. Her proven record in managing legislative and civil rights issues will be a

valuable asset to the Department and the State," said Commissioner Castro.

Hendricks served previously as the Director of Regulatory and Legal Affairs for the NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA), and was a managing attorney with New Jersey Protection and Advocacy, a non-profit civil rights litigation agency. Prior to that, Hendricks was personnel and labor analyst at the Department of Personnel and also served as legislative aide to the late Senator Wynona M. Lipman.

"I am honored to join Commissioner Castro's staff and assist her in accomplishing this Administration's mission of ensuring fair and efficient human resources programs and services for New Jersey's public workforce," stated Hendricks.



Shown with Commissioner Castro in the above photos are NJDOP appointees: Michele Meyer-Shipp, Esq. (in photo at left), the new Director of the Division of Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action; and Candice G. Hendricks, Esq. (in photo at right), the Department's new Legislative Liaison.

and regulation with the task of maintaining a workplace free of discrimination and ensuring that equal employment opportunities are afforded to all State employees and job applicants regardless of their backgrounds," she added.

Prior to joining the Department of Personnel, Meyer-Shipp was Equal Employment Opportunity Officer for the New Jersey Department of Labor, and was a litigation associate with the law firms of Lowenstein Sandler, P.C. and Collier, Jacob & Mills, P.C. specializing in employment-related matters, and has been an adjunct professor at Seton Hall University School of Law.

Candice G. Hendricks, Esq., was appointed Legislative Liaison for the NJ Department of Personnel by Commis-